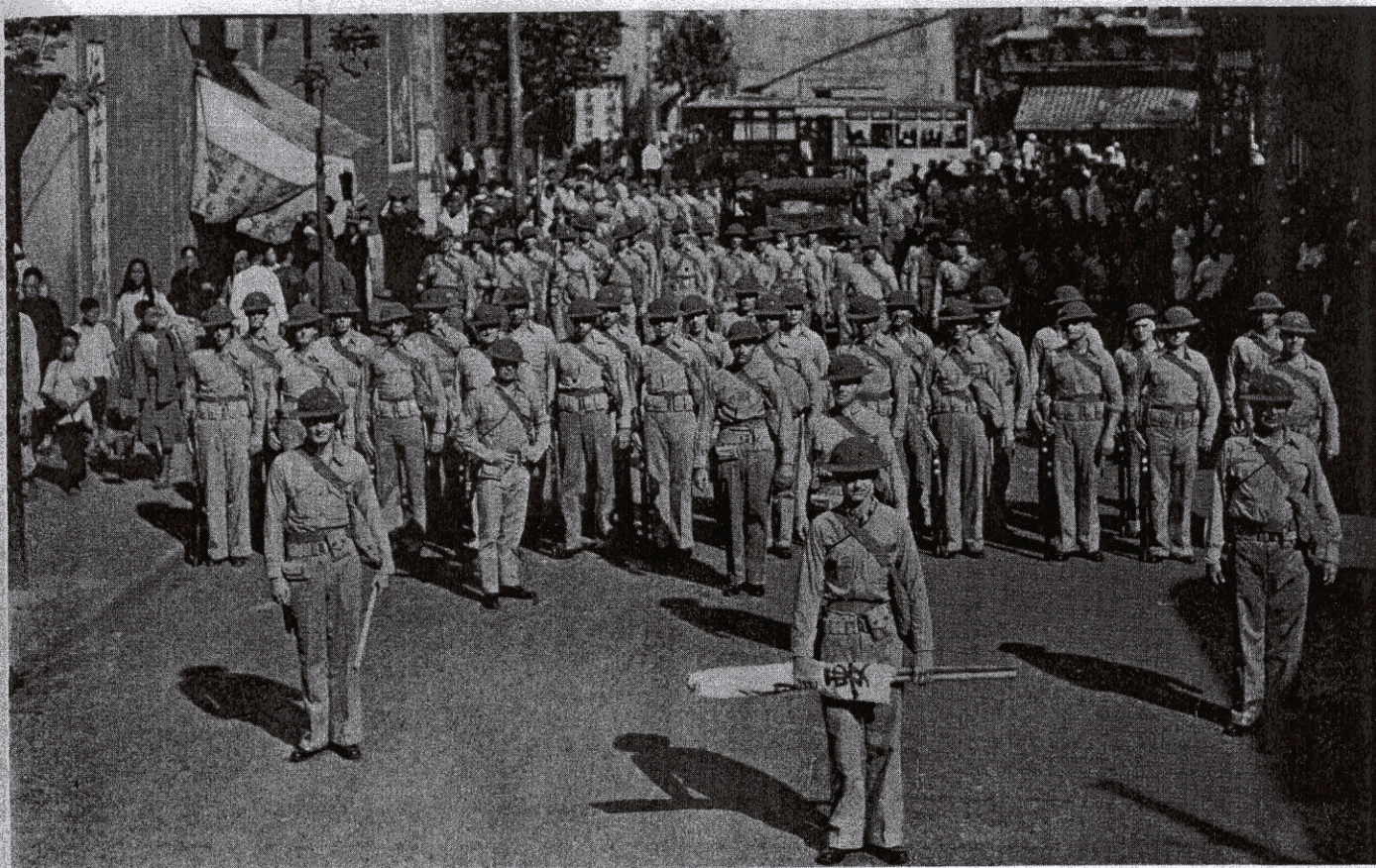


The Employment of the Marine Rifle Company in Street Riot Operations

BY CAPTAIN WALLACE M. GREENE, U. S. M. C.



The Company is Formed

THE field phone rang.

The Major's swivel chair tilted forward to a horizontal position.

"Second Battalion, Major Jones speaking." He listened a moment. "Yes, sir, he is. Just a moment, Colonel, until he cuts in."

The Major turned to the Battalion Commander. "The Regimental Commander is on the phone, Colonel."

The Battalion Commander lifted his receiver. "Blank speaking, Colonel."

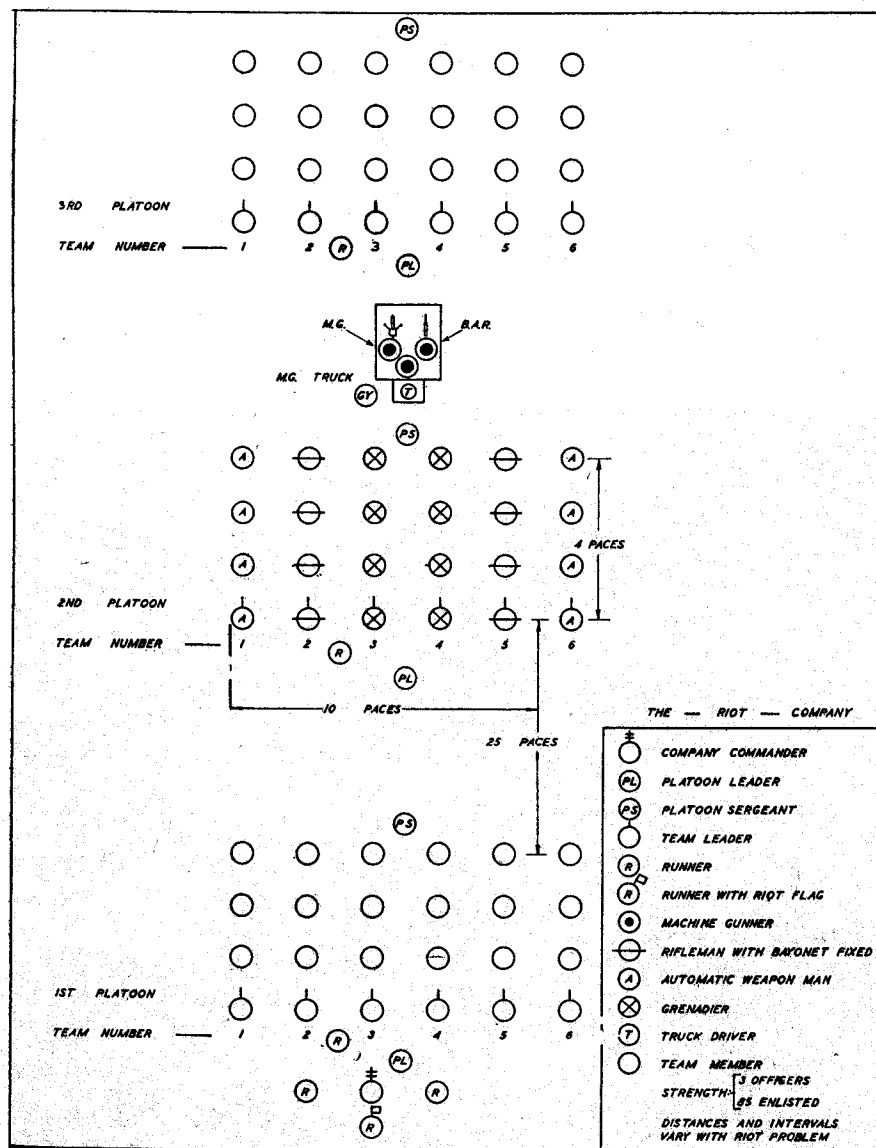
"Blank, this is White," commenced the Old Man, "The Police Commissioner just phoned me that a riot is under way in front of the Chu Lin cotton mill on Sinza Road. You remember the place—Japanese owned. The police riot squad and the reserves have been badly mauled. According to the Commissioner this is the worse riot that the police have ever experienced. Been some shooting—both

policemen and Chinese killed and wounded. The mob has gone crazy. I want you to straighten the mess out immediately. Keep me informed here of any developments. That's all." There was a click as the Regimental Commander hung up.

The Battalion Commander turned to his Exec. and snapped, "Have 'Assembly' sounded at once. Notify Captain, Company 'G,' to report to me here immediately."

A few moments later Captain, Company "G," reported.

"Captain," said the Battalion Commander, "a mob of Chinese is rioting in the street in front of the Chu Lin cotton mill on Sinza Road. Several policemen and Chinese have been killed or injured. The police can no longer handle the situation. They have called on the Regiment for help. The Regimental Commander has given us the job. I want you to proceed to the mill at once with your company and take the situation in hand. Use whatever



force may be necessary. I know that I can rely upon your good judgment. The rest of the battalion will stand by in the compound. Keep me informed here of your progress. Use city phone or runner."

"Aye, aye, sir," the Company Commander saluted and left. Now—suppose that you were in that company commander's boots. The Battalion Commander expects you to do a good job. What weapons, what formations, what tactics are you going to use against this infuriated mob? Is your outfit organized and trained to act as a riot company? Do your men, your NCOs and your lieutenants know their stuff in a situation like this? And remember—you can't organize, you can't equip and you can't teach while en route to the scene of the riot. You can't afford to muddle through, either. You and your outfit must have a definite plan of action and know how to execute it.

My story happens to have a Shanghai setting but your's may be placed closer home and offer even a more complicated problem on what to do and how to do it than does this one. But here we are back at our company office already. You are Captain, Company "G." What are you going to do?

The following is an illustrated outline of a successful method developed to meet just such a situation. Formulated in 1937 and 1938 it was designed to answer the questions of organization equipment and training of a marine rifle company in street riot operations in as simple and direct a manner as possible.

Please examine the accompanying diagram. The riot company consists of three platoons. Each platoon is composed of six fighting teams of four men each. The teams are numbered one through six from the right flank. Each platoon is commanded by a lieutenant assisted by a platoon sergeant. There are no platoon guides. The platoon leader has one runner. The riot company is commanded by a captain. Company headquarters consist of one gunnery sergeant and three runners. Total personnel of the riot company: four officers, eighty-six enlisted. (This number includes one truck driver and three machine gunners.)

Each man of the first and third platoons is equipped with rifle, bayonet, cartridge belt with one hundred rounds, gas mask and steel helmet. In the second platoon, two men of the first and sixth teams carry Browning automatic rifles. The other two men in each of these teams carry Thompson sub-machine guns. Extra magazines for these automatic weapons are in the riot truck. The second and fifth teams carry rifles with bayonets fixed. They have one hundred rounds in their cartridge belts. The third and fourth teams

are grenadiers. Each grenadier wears a grenade carrier holding eight chemical grenades (CN tear gas). All men in the second platoon are equipped with gas mask and steel helmet. Officers, gunnery sergeant and platoon sergeants carry pistol, twenty-one rounds, gas mask and steel helmet. No leggings or field scarfs are worn.

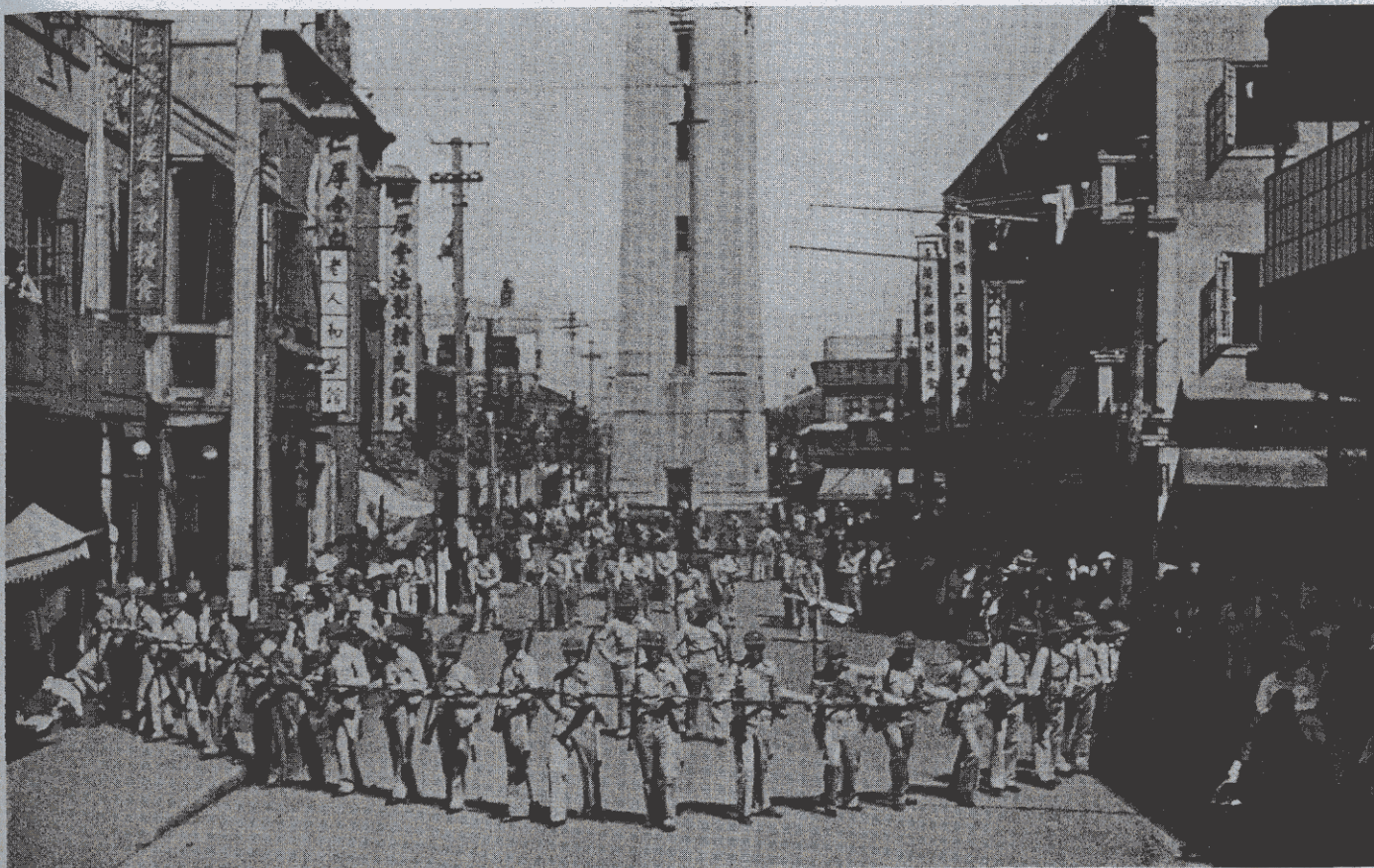
The riot truck is placed between the second and third platoons. It is in charge of the gunnery sergeant. It carries the following personnel and equipment:

PERSONNEL

One gunnery sergeant (in charge).
One driver.
Three machine gunners.

EQUIPMENT

One machine gun mounted.
Ammunition MG—in belts.
One BAR with loaded magazine.
One TSMG with loaded magazine.
Extra loaded BAR magazines.
Extra loaded TSMG magazines.



Clearing a Passage Through a Friendly Crowd With a Rope



Grenadier Teams Forward

- One case .30 cal. ammunition.
- One case .45 cal. ammunition.
- One riot flag.
- Ten flashlights, complete.
- Two fifty foot ropes.
- Two crow bars.
- Four shovels.
- Two picks.
- Two axes.
- Ten extra gas masks.
- Ten boxes gas grenades (CN tear gas).
- Four boxes hand grenades (HE)
- Extra batons (if batons are used).

One of the runners accompanying the company commander carries a riot flag on which is painted in large letters or characters a warning to disperse immediately.

The initial approach formation of the riot company is column of platoons, each platoon in line of fighting teams. The newly-organized marine rifle company is especially adaptable to this formation. A twelve-man squad furnishes three four-man fighting teams or one of the homologous halves of a riot platoon. The approach formation of the riot company is kept as compact as possible. The riot truck follows immediately behind the second platoon.

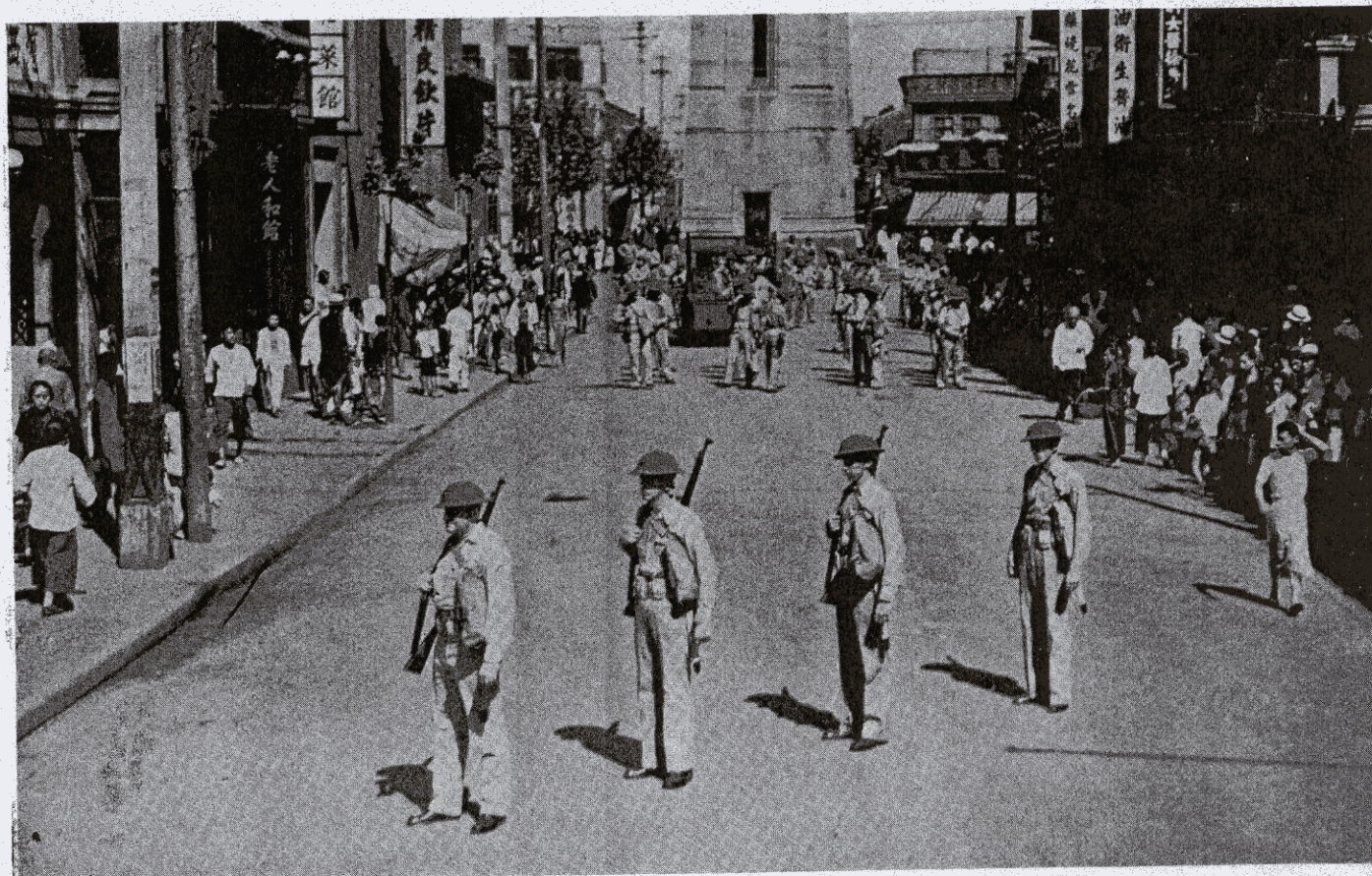
Prior to sighting the mob the riot company is halted and placed in riot formation. This is accomplished in the following manner. Gas masks are adjusted. The second and third teams of the second platoon move to the front around the right flank of the first platoon. The fourth and fifth

teams of the same platoon pass to the front around the left flank of the first platoon. The grenadiers place themselves in line across the street. The rifle teams take position on line in front of the intervals between the grenadiers, forming a protecting screen for the grenadiers. The second platoon leader (with runner) advances with the teams from his platoon. He directs their operations. The platoon sergeant of the second platoon remains behind in charge of the remaining two teams (automatic weapons) of his platoon. This illustrates a general rule of movement for platoon leaders and platoon sergeants.

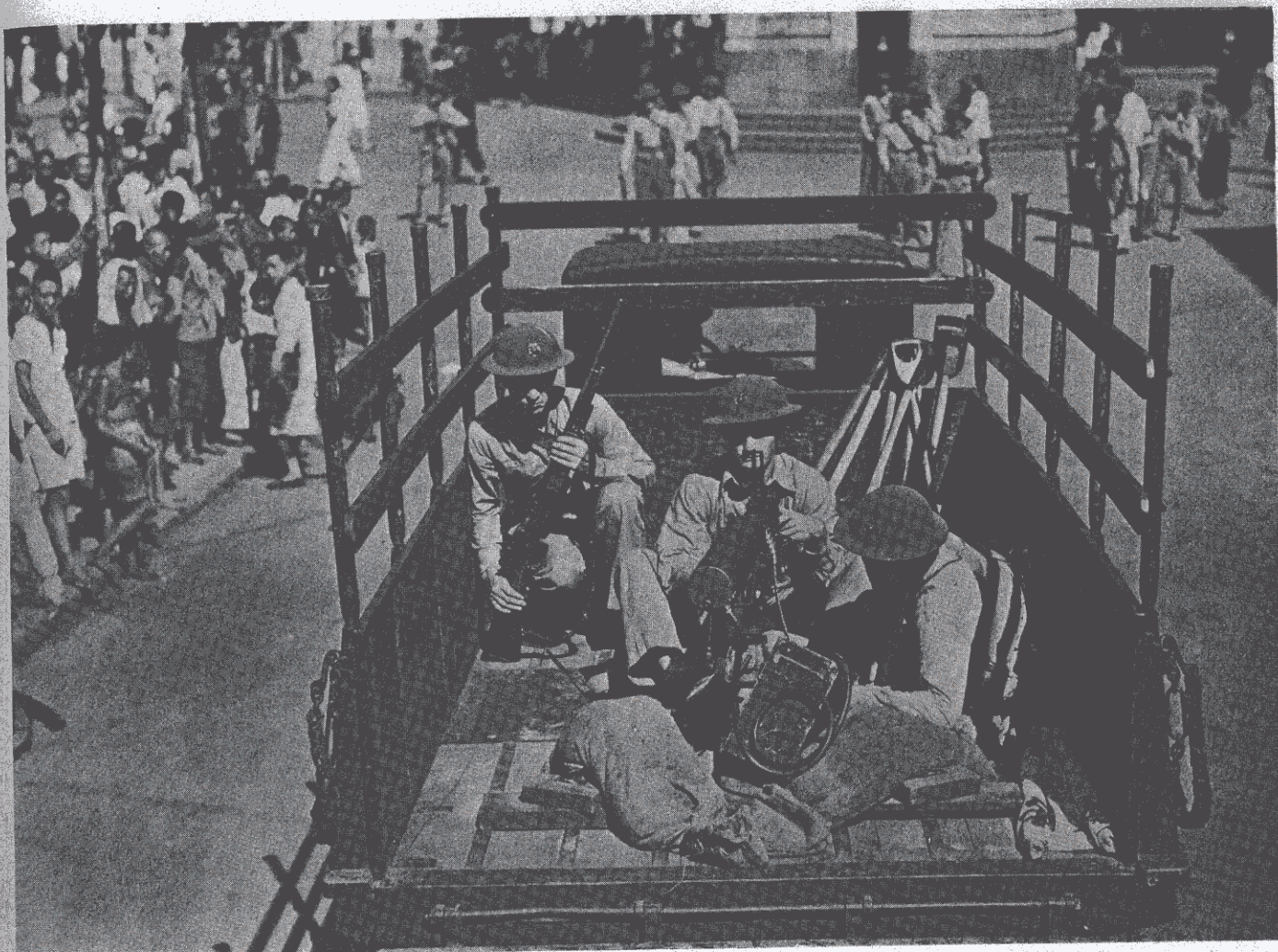
The line of grenadiers and rifle screen having been established, the first platoon is placed in line of skirmishers across the street, first team on the right. The men are placed as close together as possible on this skirmish line. However, be sure to allow them sufficient interval to use their rifle butts. In very narrow streets, one or more teams may have to fall back behind the line. In wide streets one or more teams may have to be ordered forward from the third platoon in order to establish a secure line of skirmishers.

The company commander (with runners) takes place behind the line of grenadiers. From this position he draws from the concentrated strength of his company in the rear and plays it against the mob to his front.

Having been placed in riot formation, the company advances upon the mob. Once the mob is sighted the riot company must not halt. To do so is to encourage the mob to stand. The company moves slowly, but surely, forward upon the mob. From behind the line of grenadiers the riot



The Heart of the Riot Company



Covering a Withdrawal

banner is displayed in warning. When it is definitely seen that the mob is not going to disperse, the company halts at grenade distance.

The grenadiers throw grenades. The grenade teams with their protecting rifle teams quickly drop back around the left and right flanks of the line of skirmishers (first platoon). The first platoon charges the mob, using rifle butts to disperse them. (*Note well:* The marine riot company is equipped with rifles instead of batons for two reasons. First: The marine riot company will be called into action against a stubborn and ugly mob which the police have failed to break with batons. Second: The company retains its fire power for any emergency.) The company commander may reenforce the first platoon by ordering forward fighting teams from the third platoon.

In spite of the gas and rifle butts the mob may stand. Some of the marines are down—shots have been fired by the rioters—the crisis in the riot has arrived. The time for diplomacy and tear gas has passed.

The company commander orders forward the automatic weapon teams of the second platoon. They form a line

(Continued on page 62)

